

# NOTABLE AMERICAN WOMEN 1607–1950

*A Biographical Dictionary*

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G–O

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with her religious affiliation, at a local Presbyterian church, and she was buried in the Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo.

[Commentaries on Anna Green's theories of detective fiction far outnumber biographical statements. Beyond the obvious sources—*Nat. Cyc. Am. Biog.*, IX, 257–58; *Who Was Who in America*, vol. I (1942), under Rohlf; and *Who's Who among North Am. Authors*, 1929–30—the following are useful: Howard Haycraft, *Murder for Pleasure* (1941); Kathleen Woodward in the *Bookman*, Oct. 1929; Grant Overton, *The Women Who Make Our Novels* (1928); Ralph L. Rusk, ed., *The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, VI (1939), 22–23. See also Stephen W. Phoenix, *The Whitney Family of Conn.* (1878), I, 712–13, II, 1518; and Merle Johnson, *Am. First Editions* (4th ed., 1942). Both the *Publishers' Weekly*, Apr. 20 and 27, 1935, and the *N.Y. Times*, Apr. 12, 1935, commented on her life and work at the time of her death. For information about her husband's career, see *Literary Digest*, May 29, 1915, p. 1291, and *Architectural Forum*, Aug. 1936.]

CARLIN T. KINDILIEN

**GREEN, Anne Catherine Hoof** (c. 1720–Mar. 23, 1775), “printer to the Province” of Maryland from 1767 until her death, was probably born in Holland and brought to Pennsylvania as a small child. The first known fact concerning her is that she was married in Christ Church, Philadelphia, on Apr. 25, 1738, to Jonas Green, a journeyman printer from Boston whose family had been prominent in the trade since the mid-seventeenth century. Green, who had found employment in Philadelphia with Benjamin Franklin and Andrew Bradford, moved by the following October to Annapolis, Md., where he soon became printer for the Province of Maryland and, beginning in 1745, publisher of the weekly *Maryland Gazette*, one of the earliest colonial newspapers. He was also register of St. Anne's Church (Anglican), an alderman of the city, and postmaster. He made his political mark in his fight against the Stamp Act. Mrs. Green occasionally advertised the sale of “Choice good Coffee” and “very good Chocolate” at the post office, which was evidently their home. The rearing of a large family, however, undoubtedly occupied much of her time, since she bore fourteen children (the first in October 1738, the last in 1760), of whom six lived to maturity: Rebecca, Mary, William, Frederick, Samuel, and Augusta.

She doubtless began to take an active part in the printing business some time before 1767, for upon her husband's death in that year her press produced the *Acts and Votes and Proceedings* of the Assembly of 1767 on schedule,

and the *Gazette* continued without a break. In the issue of Apr. 16, 1767, she announced her intention of carrying on her husband's business with the help of her son William, and on Jan. 7, 1768, shortly after his twenty-first birthday, the *Gazette* appeared under the name of Anne Catherine Green and William Green. With the death of William in August 1770, Frederick replaced him; on Jan. 2, 1772, when he was not quite twenty-two, his services were recognized in the colophon as Anne Catherine Green & Son.

Jonas Green's allowance as public printer had terminated with his death, and for more than a year Mrs. Green operated without public appropriations. She performed her duties so well, however, that the following June the Assembly appointed her to her husband's post and at the same compensation. In addition they gave her the task of supplying “book Notes and Manifests” for the tobacco-inspection warehouses, and in 1770 she was paid for printing the bills of credit authorized by the Assembly of 1769. She also published a yearly almanac and printed a few political pamphlets and some satirical works. Her most ambitious undertaking, apart from the newspaper and public business, was Elie Vallette's *Deputy Commissary's Guide* (1774), a book of 133 leaves detailing the procedures and forms to be used in probating wills and settling estates. Her issue of *The Charter and Bye-Laws of the City of Annapolis* has been described as “a beautifully printed little volume of fifty-two pages, which for typographical nicety could hardly have been surpassed by the best of her contemporaries in the colonies” (Wroth, p. 91).

Until Aug. 20, 1773, when William Goddard began publication in Baltimore of the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*, the *Gazette* was the only Maryland newspaper, and its role in reporting the political events leading to the Revolution was an important one. Mrs. Green printed communications from the Northern colonies showing the increasing protest against the Townshend Acts and the establishment and success of nonimportation agreements. Through her columns John Dickinson's *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer* reached the public. Accounts of the Boston Tea Party and the Boston Port Act of 1774 aroused great excitement. By informing the people of plans and protest elsewhere as well as at home, the *Gazette* no doubt unconsciously helped to push the revolutionary cause. During such turbulent times a printing firm that depended heavily upon public business for its support might have made enemies it could ill

afford. But Mrs. Green opened her columns to both sides of an argument; and she was generally careful not to print libelous attacks on individuals, even when the authors were men of influence. After her death (presumably in Annapolis) her son Frederick took over the business and continued to observe her rules, even though his comments and selection of materials reflected more and more radical views.

Little is known of Anne Catherine Green as a person. The *Gazette's* obituary couched in the language of conventional praise, credits her with "a mild and benevolent Disposition" and exemplary "conjugal Affection" and "parental Tenderness." As a printer, she excelled. She made the *Gazette* a forum for discussion and a valuable, if not always impartial, source of information during a critical period in history.

[*Archives of Md.*, vols. LIX (1942), LXI-LXIV (1944-47); files of *Md. Gazette*, Apr. 1767-Mar. 1775; St. Anne's Parish Register, 1708-85, and Parish Vestry Minutes, 1713-67 (MSS., Md. Hall of Records); Lawrence C. Wroth, *A Hist. of Printing in Colonial Md., 1686-1776* (1922); Julia C. Spruill, *Women's Life and Work in the Southern Colonies* (1938); Charles A. Barker, *The Background of the Revolution in Md.* (1940); David C. Skaggs, "Editorial Policies of the *Md. Gazette*, 1765-1783," *Md. Hist. Mag.*, Dec. 1964.]

LOIS GREEN CARR

**GREEN, Hetty Howland Robinson** (Nov. 21, 1834-July 3, 1916), eccentric builder of a great fortune, was born of wealthy Quaker stock in New Bedford, Mass. She was the first of two children and only daughter of Edward Mott Robinson and his wife, Abby Slocum Howland. As her brother died in infancy, Hetty grew up as an only child, and hence the sole direct heir of the Howland family fortune, accumulated in whaling and foreign trade by the venerable firm of Isaac Howland, Jr., & Company. Her grandfather Gideon Howland, Jr., took an active part in the family firm until his death in 1847, when he left his estate to his two daughters, the spinster Sylvia Ann and Hetty's mother Abby. Hetty's father, Edward Robinson, who came of a prominent Quaker family of Providence, R.I., was also a member of the firm, and its major partner after Gideon's death.

Despite their wealth, Hetty's parents emphasized the Quaker values of thrift, simplicity in dress and life, hatred of laziness and waste, and honest bluntness in dealing with others. "Young man, I am a Quaker," Hetty replied in later years to a reporter who asked the reason

for her way of life. This austere pattern was indelibly impressed upon the young girl by her strong-willed father, who sometimes punished his daughter by forcing her to remain silent for periods up to twenty-four hours, and by the severe discipline of her first school, that of Eliza Wing at Sandwich, Mass. Subsequently, from age sixteen to nineteen, she attended the Boston school for upper-class New England young ladies run by the Rev. Charles Russell Lowell and his wife, Anna Cabot (Jackson) Lowell.

In Hetty's childhood milieu, business was the sole focus of life. When her grandfather's eyes grew dim, she read the financial pages of the newspaper to him. Later she did the same for her father, whom she often accompanied on his daily rounds. From her father, known as "Black Hawk" Robinson, she acquired a steely aloofness in dealing with competitors and subordinates. With such a father, and with a mother who was totally incompetent in business, Hetty apparently determined early to prove that she could be as efficient and ruthless as any man in managing money. "I was forced into business," she said later. "... I was taught from the time I was six years old that I would have to look after my property" (Sparkes and Moore, pp. 34-35).

The estate which was eventually to make Hetty Green "the richest woman in America" began with \$8,000 from her mother's estate in 1860 and a gift of \$20,000 from her Aunt Sylvia. In 1865 her father died, leaving her about \$1,000,000 outright and the annual net earnings of more than \$4,000,000 in a trust fund. In the same year her Aunt Sylvia died, bequeathing half her estate to charity and establishing with the balance a trust fund from whose income \$65,000 annually was to go to Hetty, with the principal to be distributed to the living Howland heirs at the time of Hetty's death. Dissatisfied, Hetty in 1866 brought a lawsuit in which she claimed her aunt's entire estate. Her principal piece of evidence was a will, in her own handwriting but bearing Sylvia Howland's signature, which left everything to her. Hetty maintained that her aunt had dictated and signed the second will shortly before her death. This celebrated "Howland Will Case" dragged on for five years, bringing Hetty considerable notoriety as eminent handwriting experts testified that the signature on the second will was a crudely traced forgery. In 1871 the case ended in a draw. Hetty's claim was rejected, but she was given \$660,000, representing the increment in the principal of the trust fund in the years since the beginning of the trial.